STD facilities in villages of Punjab

1194. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise number of villages in the State of Punjab particularly in the border areas which have been linked with the cities by telephone and STD facilities upto 31st January, 1997;

(b) the district-wise number of villages proposed to be linked up during 1996-97 and 1997-98; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) (i) The district-wise details of villages are given in the Statement I (*see* below).

(ii) The district-wise details of villages particularly in Border area is given in the Statement II (*see* below)

(b) Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(c) (i) It is planned to provide telephone facilities to all villages progressively.

(ii) It is proposed to provide STD facilities in 19 village during 1996-97. Plan for 1997-98 is yet to be finalised.

Statement I

Sl. No.	District	No. of villages	No. of villages falling on border areas of Punjab	No. of villages provided with telephone facility (VPTs) upto 31.1.97 without STD	No. of Telephone Exchanges provided with STD facility*
1.	Amritsar	1293	1256	990	61
2.	Gurdaspur	1736	1736	887	29
3.	Ferozepur	970	970	570	26
4.	Mukatsar				
5.	Faridkot	904	—	90	49
6.	Moga				
7.	Jallandhar				
8.	Kapurthala	1988	—	1187	50
9.	Nawanshahar				
10.	Ludhiana	916	—	751	56
11.	Patiala				
12.	Fatehgarhsahib	1586	—	1114	16
13.	Bhatinda				
14.	Mansa	528	—	503	20
15.	Sangrur	739	—	727	50
16.	Hoshiarpur				
17.	Ropar	2567	—	1141	70
18.	Chandigarh (UT)	25	—	16	4

*The Village Public Telephones (VPTs) connected to these Exchangs can have STD facility in case there is a demand.

Statement II

Sl No.	Name of district on border area	No. of villages	No. of villages provided with telephone facilites upto 31.1.97	No. of Telephone Exhanges provided with STD facility	No. of villages proposed for telephone facilities during 1996-97	No. of Telephone Exchanges working in villages/ Rural areas proposed for STD facility during 1996-97
1.	Amritsar	1293	990	61	100	5
2.	Gurdaspur	1736	887	29	100	14
3.	Ferozepur	970	570	26	150	—

Scheme to expand communication network

1195. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any scheme to expand communications network in the country particularly in the State of Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The targets for installation of new telephone connections for the expansion on communication network during 1996-97 and proposed during 1997-98 are as follows:

(in lakh)

Year	For entire Country	For State of Punhab
1996-97	24.50	1.53
1997-98	29.00 (tentative)	1.69

(c) Does not arise in view of (b).

(d) Efforts are being made to achieve the targets fully by making available the resources like equipments and other infrastructures.

Telephone Exchange in Punjab

1196. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges functioning in Punjab, district-wise;

(b) the capacity of each of these exchagnes;

(c) whether Government propose to increase their capacity and make modernisation thereof; and

(d) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) Total exchagnes working in Pubjab Circle are 876. The details are given in Annexure [*See* Appendix 180 Annexure No. 30]

(c) Yes, Sir. The exchanges have already been modernised and there are plans to increase the capacity.

(d) The details are given in Annexure [*See* Appendix 180 Annexure No. 30]